

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 4785

LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PGOV, GH
SUBJ: UNREST AND DISSIDENCE MOUNT IN GHANA

1. SUMMARY: CURRENT AND POTENTIAL WORK STOPPAGES
PLUS STATEMENTS BY LEADING CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT
BODIES INCREASE PRESSURE ON ACHEAMPONG REGIME.
STUDENT DISSIDENCE CONTINUES ALTHOUGH LEGON
CAMPUS CLOSED. END SUMMARY

2. WORK STOPPAGES BY SEVERAL LABOR AND PROFESSIONAL
GROUPS MAY ADD TO PRESSURE ON ACHEAMPONG REGIME
APPLIED THUS FAR LARGELY BY STUDENTS. BANK WORKERS
IN OPEN LETTER TO SMC HAVE THREATENED STRIKE AND
SET DEADLINE OF JUNE 22 FOR REINSTATEMENT OF BANK
OF GHANA GOVERNOR NIKOI AND CHIEF JUSTICE AZU CRABBE,
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PLUS RETURN OF A.M. ISSIFU TO TUC AND A. APPIAH
TO SOCIAL SECURITY BANK. ACCRA LAWYERS ARE STILL
OUT BUT BAR ASSOCIATION MEETING SET FOR JUNE 25
MAY CALL OUT OTHER LAWYERS. RAILWAY WORKERS AND
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS MAY STRIKE ON SERVICE
CONDITIONS WHICH COULD HAVE POLITICAL OVERTONES
EVEN IF UNINTENDED.

3. POSSIBLY EVEN GREATER POLITICAL IMPACT MAY RESULT FROM STATEMENTS OF BOTH CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE AND (PROTESTANT) CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OPPOSING MILITARY PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT. THESE TWO ORGANIZATIONS HIGHLY PRESITIGIOUS AND INFLUENTIAL.

4. UNIVERSITY OF GHANA LEGON CAMPUS CLOSED BY UNIVERSITY COUNCIL ACTION (THIS IS A UNIVERSITY NOT GOVERNMENT BODY AND ACTION MAY TAKE SOME PRESSURE OFF GOVERNMENT) AND MOST STUDENTS QUICKLY DISPERSED. UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY KUMASI CONVOCATION ISSUED ANGRY STATEMENT SUPPORTING DISSIDENTS AND STATING IT WOULD CEASE ACADEMIC FUNCTIONS UNTIL GOVERNMETN RESIGNS BUT CAMPUS HAS YET TO BE OFFICIALLY CLOSED. NO WORD YET FROM THIRD UNIVERSITY AT CAPE COAST. BEFORE CLOSING LEGON STUDENTS BURNED THREE CARS ON SUCCESSIVE DAYS ON CAMPUS: DRIVERS WERE GRILLED AND AT LEAST TWO IDENTIFIED AS GOG SECURITY SERVICE OFFICERS. A PLANNED STUDENT DEMONSTRATION IN KUMASI WAS THWARTED AND A CACHE OF HOMEMADE WEAPONS INCLUDING MOLOTOV COCKTAILS WAS DISCOVERED AT NEARBY KUMASI POLY-TECHNIC. ACCRA POLYTECHNIC STUDENTS STAGED LARGE DEMONSTRATION JUNE 21 NEAR MAKOLA MARKET IN DOWNTOWN
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5. GOG SECURITY ORGANIZATIONS REACTING COOLY AND ARE OBVIOUSLY TRYING TO AVOID CONFRONTATIONS AND VIOLENCE. NO ARRESTS WERE MADE IN CONNECTION WITH STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS CAR BURNING OR WEAPONS FINDS, AND JONES-QUARTEY, STUDENT WHO WAS ARRESTED IN MID-MAY FOR POSTING ANTI-GOVERNMENT POSTERS, HAS BEEN RELEASED ON BAIL.

6. COMMENT: ANTI-GOVERNMENT PRESSURE CONTINUES TO BUILD BUT EXTENT OF COORDINATION BETWEEN DISSIDENT GROUPS IS PROBABLY LIMITED. CLOSURE OF LEGON CAMPUS AND DISPERSAL OF STUDENTS COOLS DOWN WHAT HAS BEEN UP TO NOW THE MAIN CENTER OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT ACTIVISM. HOWEVER, THE EFFECT MAY ALSO BE TO SPREAD DISSIDENT ACTIVITIES TO STUDENTS' HOME AREAS.
SMITH

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